

The affects of perception on other people psychology essay



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Introduction

Perception is the process by which people organize and obtain meaning from the sensory motivation they receive from the environment. This report focuses on perception, its importance and how it affects other people, groups of people and the social climate of an organization.

Perception is defined and the key factors affection perception is described.

The elements which determines those factors (perceiver, target and situation) are stated in order to give a crystal clear idea on perception.

Attribution theory of person perception is discussed with examples and the determinants of attribution is discussed also the errors in attribution theory is analyzed.

Shortcuts in judging people is illustrated, may lead to misinterpretations. It's a must to know what these are in order to recognize how to perceive properly. The relationship between perception and individual decision making is elaborated which shows the importance of perception.

Finally the affects of perception on other people, group of people and social climate of an organization is explained which will reveal the importance of perception more deeply.

What is perception?

Perception is the process by which people organize and obtain meaning from the sensory motivation they receive from the environment. It is the process by which we make sense of our world. No two people in the same situation will perceive it in exactly the same way.

The process of perception is an important activity in life of an individual. Our environment, including the business environment, is littered with numerous stimuli trying to attract our attention. The quality of our perception depends on the way we organize, process and interpret the stimuli or information reaching our senses.

(Pierce & Gardner., 2002)

Factors influencing perception

The Perceiver

An interpret made on a target seen by an individual is mostly based in personal characteristics of that perceiver. The main factors which effects the perceiver are :

Attitudes.

Motives.

Interest.

Experience.

Expectations.

The Target

Another factor effecting perception is the characteristics of the target. This These characteristics include;

Motion – People give more attention to moving objects

Sounds -People notice sounds quickly

Size – A larger object is more likely to be noticed than a smaller one

Background – The contrasting factor creates more attention

Proximity – A closer object will grab more attention

The situation

The circumstance which an individual recognizes the target too have an effect on that individual's perception. These situational factors include:

Time

Social setting – The surrounding environment or the condition of the community or society.

Work setting – The surrounding environment at the workplace.

Attribution theory (Person Perception)

A variation of theories of perception is attribution. Attribution theory has been proposed to develop explanations of how we judge people differently depending on the meaning we attribute to given behavior. (Robbins, Judge & Sanghi., 2009)

This theory suggests that as we observe a person's behavior, we try to establish whether it was caused by internal or external causes. When something is internally caused, it is under the personal control of the individual, if it is caused externally, it is the result of the power of the situation faced by the individual.

This can be illustrated with the use of a simple example

An employee is late for work. One might ask whether the cause is attributed to sleeping in because of being at a late night party in the previous night, or whether it was a matter of being caught up in a traffic queue due to a road accident. If the former were the case, that would be an internal interpretation. If the latter, it would amount to an external interpretation.

The determination of attribution depends on three factors

Distinctiveness - How different the behavior being observed from other behavior of an individual. For an example if an employee's attendance record is excellent and this is re-enforced by overall satisfactory performance at work, a recent bout of absenteeism could be considered unusual. But, if the absenteeism fits to a general pattern, and is not unusual, an internal attribution will be attached.

Consensus - When each individual behave or responds in the same way we can identify that the behavior shows consensus. For an example a particular employee's late arrival at work is observed. When the observer establishes that all those who took the same route to work as the particular employee were also late, possibly because delays due to bad weather, the conditions necessary for consensus arise. If consensus is high, one is likely to attach external attributes to the particular employee's lateness. However if the other employees travelled via the same route arrived at work on time, the consensus factor would be absent and internal interpretation could be attributed to the particular employee's lateness.

Consistency - The observation of a person's behavior takes consistency into account. For example if an employee is responding in the same way over a period of time (ex: coming late to work for over six months), his or her behavior is consistent. This could be contrasted with an example of an employee arriving late on the odd occasion. The more consistent the behavior the more likely the observer is inclined to attribute the behavior in question to internal causes.

(Perception., n. d.)

Errors in Attribution theory

Self-serving bias

This is a tendency for individuals to attribute their own success to internal factors and place blame for failures on external factors. Their approach is self-serving. (Eugene., 2000)

Fundamental attribution error

We tend to underestimate the influence of external factors and overestimate the influence of internal factors. (Eugene., 2000)

Shortcuts in judging others

Selective perception

" we hear what we want to hear and see what we want to see". Selective perception occurs when people select for perception those things that are consistent with their views of themselves and the world, and reject or argue against those views that are inconsistent. In organizations. (Pierce & Gardner., 2002)

For example, people with high-esteem believe that they are highly competent and tend to reject criticism of their performance. For an example if we ask an employee in the marketing department ‘ what is the most important department in an organization, he or she will surely say that it’s the marketing department. If we ask the same question form an employee in the production department he or she will say that it’s the production department.

Halo Effect

The process of generalizing from an overall evaluation of an individual to specific characteristics of the person is named as halo effects. (Pierce & Gardner., 2002)

As an example when a questionnaire on evaluating the lecturers at a university is given to the students they will mark the same grade (good, average or poor) for almost all the questions asked because the students base their ratings on the lecturer’s overall performance. And this impression may use only a single distinguishing characteristic. Ex: “ he is really good because I never felt bored in the class”

Contrast effects

Our reaction to a person is always influenced by the people whom we have met before, we never judge people on isolation. (Pierce & Gardner., 2002)

For an example, in job interview program the candidate’s position in the lineup will affect his or her evaluation. It can be a favorable for that specific candidate if the previous candidates were low in qualifications and

suitability, also it can affect badly if the previously interviewed candidates are high in qualities and qualifications.

Stereotyping

Stereotyping occurs when a person has certain beliefs about a class of stimuli, and then generalizes those beliefs to encounters with individual members of that class. (Pierce & Gardner., 2002)

As an example, many people believe that Japanese cars are superior in quality to American made cars. Through stereotyping process, you could expect a person to criticize American cars no matter how well it performs.

Perception and individual decision making

“ Every decision requires us to interpret and evaluate information. We typically receive data from multiple sources and need to screen, process and interpret it. Which data, for instance are relevant to the decision and which are not? The perception of the decision maker will answer that question”
(Roobbins et al., 2009)

Every individual in an organization will face a situation to make decisions, or in other words to make a choice between two or more alternatives. Top management has as well as the non-managerial staff has to make decisions. The top management is mostly involved in making decisions on behalf of the company. Those decisions will comprise of setting organizational goals, strategic plans, resource allocation etc. Middle level managers have to make decisions on staffing schedules, production schedules, recruiting etc. The non-managerial staff until the recent past had to only make decisions such

as how much he or she should be committed to the job, when should he or she come to work, what kind of an effort should be placed on work etc. But in the recent past more decentralized approach on management style has become popular. So this enabled the frontline staff to make job related decisions.

An individual's decision making process is influenced by his or her perception. This indeed creates importance for perception because it can affect other people, group of people and the social climate of an organization.

How perception affects other people, groups of people and the social climate of an organization

People's behavior is based on how they interpret the reality, or else simply their perception. The reality can be something else while individuals interpret it differently which might not be the reality. They behave on those interpretations regardless of whether it is the reality or not. The world which is perceived is more important than the realistic world when concerning behavior.

Perception is interpreting the environment where other people are also a part and which we have to perceive correctly. Misinterpretations would lead into conflicts. In order to maintain healthy relationships with other people it is very much important to understand perception and avoid misinterpretations.

When dealing with groups of people perception could be misinterpreted because of stereotyping. Even though people are grouped according to
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various reasons (religion, nationality, gender, age etc.) the individuals within those groups does not have all same behaviors. True they have some commonalities which have gathered them together but there could be different individuals. Having a good knowledge in perception would benefit and individual immensely when socializing and team work.

Perception is playing a significant role in the social climate of the organization. Having healthy perceptions would definitely help an organization to carry out their processes more smoothly. When the manager have a clear idea of how their subordinates behave many of the processes will be easier. Task allocation, recruiting, staffing could be done in a better way which will reduce the conflicts. As a result the workforce would be motivated as their behavior patterns are clearly identified and made use of it. Perception would determine how dedicated the workers are towards the organization. In order to make the employees have a good perception towards the organization the managers need to create a work friendly environment. Employees value the pay they get for their performance. The perception of employees about the organization affects directly on the organization's performance.

Conclusion

Perception is the process by which people organize and obtain meaning from the sensory stimuli they receive from the environment. It might not be the reality, its only the meaning that a person gives to the environment. A person's perception depends on his attitudes, experience, motives, interests ad expectations. In order to work with people it is essential to have

knowledge on perception. Perception becomes very much important within <https://assignbuster.com/the-affects-of-perception-on-other-people-psychology-essay/>

an workplace where individual work to achieve a common goal. Employees wants to see the managers making the social climate of the workplace comfortable to them and motivates them towards achieving the common goal or objective. It is very much important for the employees to have a healthy perception in order to increase the organization's overall performance.

This report has defined and given a clear idea on what perception is and its key factors, Its importance, how it affects other people, group of people and social climate of the organization.